

Will the broadcast flag interfere with consumers ability to make copies of DTV content for their personal use, either on personal video recorders or removable media?

I believe the proponents are side-stepping the issue. Copying for personal use is one thing. Being able actually to play the recording is another. Being able actually to play the recording on a different machine is yet another issue. An example is Microsoft's recently announced media machine. It advertises recording to DVD. But the implementation of DRM is such that the DVD can only be played back on the machine that recorded it! Fine for some people. But what about if you need to record things and then take them with you for use/viewing/consultation in another location, or on vacation? And what happens when the original recording device breaks down?

Would the digital flag interfere with consumers ability to send DTV content across networks, such as home digital networks connecting digital set top boxes, digital recorders, digital servers and digital display devices? Well, once again, sending is one thing. Receiving in a functional state is another. And being able to use the content on the device of one's choice is yet another.

Would the broadcast flag requirement limit consumers ability to use their existing electronic equipment (equipment not built to look for the flag) or make it difficult to use older components with new equipment that is compliant with the broadcast flag standard?
I do not believe them.

Would a broadcast flag requirement limit the development of future equipment providing consumers with new options?
Precisely. And the moment something offends their sensibilities, it will be the consumer that will pay, first with a mess of incompatible devices and systems, then with money.

What will be the cost impact, if any, that a broadcast flag requirement would have on consumer electronics equipment?
It will increase it.

Other Comments:

Audio CD's are playable in any CD player the world over. DVD's are not. The implementation of regions in DVD players is a purely commercial decision that leaves no room for personal use for consumers who travel. In an increasingly global economy, I believe it is reasonable to expect that the implementation of digital rights management and broadcast flags should be truly international in scope, and not limited to the "home turf" of powerful commercial interests.